



## SYMMETRY'S NEWSLETTER FOR MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS

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# THE BALANCE SHEET

*Setting and achieving goals is a standard practice among managers in most business environments. Often, the activity is tied in with annual performance reviews or a strategic planning process. Effective goal management is not a skill that people commonly pursue, but it is one of the most influential indicators of success. And managers who promote the concept of goal management among their staff typically have more dedicated and driven employees.*

### Goal Setting

Motivation experts contend that the reason why people are not excited and motivated to excel is that they don't have a vision or that their vision is too small.

Most people strive for contentment instead of excellence. We work within our comfort zone, which is counterproductive to attaining goals. That's because our comfort zone is what we already know; it's all the habits and reliable experiences that we're used to having. It holds us in place instead of urging us forward. In order to change our tendency to stay comfortable, we must be conscious of our thoughts and actions and make it a priority to do things on a daily basis that challenge us in various ways.

Look for unexpected opportunities and approach problems or crises as blessings in disguise, if only for the lesson learned. Taking a risk and failing at it has been the stimulus for many historical figures to go on to remarkable success. Consider Abraham Lincoln who lost his job in 1832 and experienced numerous other setbacks before being elected President in 1860. Despite failing in business, his sweetheart dying, having a nervous breakdown, and being defeated in political races or losing re-nominations seven times, he never turned away from setting new goals for himself. In fact, he used many of his personal setbacks as opportunities to succeed in other ways. For instance, when he was rejected for land officer in 1849, he pursued and was admitted to practice law in the U.S. Supreme Court.

### Make Your Goals A Reality

Most people would admit to having specific goals in life, yet don't commit to a specific plan to achieve them. Regardless of the area of focus — career, financial, home, family, relationship, health, appearance, personal development, possessions, fun and recreation, travel, spiritual, or service to others — you are more likely to succeed if you follow some basic steps:

### Write Effective Goal Statements

State your goals using language that assumes you have already achieved them. Write specific, detailed descriptions of the things you are trying to obtain. For example, "I now have a new 2009 red Corvette convertible powered by a 638-horsepower supercharged 6.2-liter V8 engine. Or, "I am sitting in my corner office as the newly appointed director of my department — the youngest person to assume this position in the company's history." If your goal is to give up something, write the goal statement in positive terms rather than negative ones, such as, "I am now free of the excess 50 pounds and I have more energy to enjoy life including participating in physical activities with my children without pain or self-consciousness."

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## Create a Step-by-Step Plan

Break each goal down into manageable steps so you have an actual plan for completion. Review your goals regularly and re-evaluate your steps and strategies because things change and your original plan may need to be modified. Include these steps in your daily “to do” list to ensure that your goals are consistently a priority in your life.

## Set a Timeline for Completion

Some goals can be achieved immediately, while others can take years to complete. Make sure that you are realistic and can accomplish what you want in the time frame you give yourself.

## Incorporate Affirmations in Your Self-Talk

Affirmations can dramatically move you forward in achieving your goals. Use positive language in the present tense, “I am proud of myself for having the strength to make good choices that make me a healthier person.” Say them out loud over and over so you get used to providing positive reinforcement to yourself.

## Track Your Progress

It helps to keep a daily or weekly record of your progress including affirmations and successes, as well as resistances and obstacles. Think of it as a way to chart your goals journey.

## Get Support When You Need It

Reaching out for help is one of the secrets of success. Don’t be too proud to seek support or ask for advice from others. Sometimes, another person’s viewpoint can help you consider different ways to approach your goal and navigate challenges.

## Stay on Target

One of the most important elements of success when striving for a goal is self-discipline. Even when you’re on a plateau and there seems to be little or no improvement; no matter how you feel, maintain your commitment. If necessary, change your approach when what you’re doing isn’t working.

## Symmetry Can Help

Symmetry understands the importance of personal and professional development. Our EAP counselors can help you determine the best approach to succeed in your goals. Let us help you and your employees.

For more information or assistance, please contact Symmetry at **(800) 236-7905** or **(414) 256-4800**.



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